

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

RSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 EB-07 COME-00 AGR-05 /085 W

----- 108533

R 211058Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8509

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 0664

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, AS

SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER'S STOPOVER IN PAKISTAN

1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY. AUSTRALIANS HERE ARE EXTREMELY PLEASED WITH THE RAPPORT PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM ESTABLISHED WITH PAK PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO DURING WHITLAM'S BRIEF ISLAMABAD STOPOVER JANUARY 19. THEY CONSIDER THAT MEETING PUT THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON THE RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, WHOSE RELATIONS WERE BADLY STRAINED BY THE BANGLADESH WAR. PAKS ALSO APPEAR PLEASED WITH THE TALKS, AND PRESS GAVE PROMINENT AND FAVORABLE COVERAGE TO THE TWO-HOUR VISIT.

2. ACCORDING TO AUSTRALIAN COUNSELOR JOHN DAUTH, MAJOR AREAS OF DISCUSSION INCLUDED PAK-BANGLADESH AND PAK-INDIAN RELATIONS, MIDDLE EAST, COMMONWEALTH MEMBERSHIP, AND AVAILABILITY OF AUSTRALIAN WHEAT. TO SURPRISE OF AUSTRALIANS HERE, WHITLAM AND BHUTTO DID NOT DISCUSS THE INDIAN OCEAN ISSUE, PERHAPS, IN DAUTH'S VIEW, BECAUSE THEIR VIEWS WERE TOO FAR APART
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TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING DURING THE 75 MINUTES THEY HAD

TO TALK. END INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY.

3. PAK-BANGLADESH AND PAK-INDIAN RELATIONS. ACCORDING TO DAUTH, BD HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CANBERRA HAD LAST WEEK URGED THAT WHITLAM RAISE WITH BHUTTO THE ISSUES OF PRE-1971 PAKISTAN ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AND REPATRIATION OF BIHARIS, TWO PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE HAMSTRUNG FURTHER PROGRESS TOWARD NORMALIZATION OF PAK-BD RELATIONS SINCE ABORTIVE BHUTTO-MUJIB SUMMIT IN DACCA LAST JUNE. WHITLAM DECIDED TO TAKE UP ONLY BIHARI ISSUE TELLING BHUTTO HE WAS RAISING IT BECAUSE OF ITS DOMESTIC POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR HIM IN AUSTRALIA. BHUTTO REHEARSED FAMILIAR PAK ACCOUNT OF DACCA JUNE DISCUSSIONS ON BOTH ASSETS/LIABILITIES AND BIHARI PROBLEMS-- THESE STRESS PAK REASONABLENESS IN CONTRAST TO ALLEGED BD INFLEXIBILITY--, NOTED THAT PAKS HAD ALREADY TAKEN IN 140,000 BIHARIS, AND MENTIONED THAT MUJIB KNEW FROM THE 1947 EXPERIENCE HOW DIFFICULT RESETTLEMENT PROBLEMS WERE. DISCUSSING BD MORE GENERALLY, BHUTTO TOLD WHITLAM AND HIS COLLEAGUES THAT THERE WAS A SWELLING SENTIMENT IN THE FORMER EAST WING OF PRO-PAKISTAN FEELING AND GROWING ANTI-INDIAN SENTIMENT THERE. HE ASSURED THEM THAT HE TOOK NO PLEASURE FROM BD'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. HE ASKED WHITLAM, WHO WAS GOING ON TO DACCA FROM ISLAMABAD, TO PASS ON HIS GREETINGS TO MUJIB. ON PAK-INDIAN RELATIONS, BHUTTO CONFINED HIMSELF TO NOTING PROGRESS SLOWLY BEING MADE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF SIMLA AGREEMENT. HE SAID THAT HE EXPECTED THE GOP AND GOI WOULD BE ABLE TO REACH AN AGREEMENT ON THE KNOTTY AND COMPLICATED CIVIL AVIATION ISSUE (RESTORATION OF AIRLINKS AND OVERFLIGHTS) IN FEBRUARY. HE ASSURED WHITLAM PAKS WANTED GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL THEIR NEIGHBORS.

4. MIDDLE EAST. BHUTTO WOULD NOT IN FORMAL SESSION COME TO GRIPS WITH ISSUE OF ISRAEL'S CONTINUED EXISTENCE, RAISED BY WHITLAM, SPOKE OF PAK COMMITMENT TO ARABS, CALLED FOR ISRAELI EVACUATION OF OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. (IN CAR RETURNING TO AIRPORT WITH WHITLAM, BHUTTO TOLD HIM PRIVATELY THAT HE DID BELIEVE THAT ISRAEL

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SHOULD REMAIN). BHUTTO SAID THAT HE THOUGHT RECOGNITION OF PLO'S ROLE BY RABAT CONFERENCE WAS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION WHICH MIGHT LEAD THE ISRAELIS TO TALK TO PALESTINIAN REPS. HE OBSERVED THAT IF ARAFAT COULD REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH THE ISRAELIS, OTHER LESS-MODERATE PALESTINIANS WOULD BE OBLIGED TO GO ALONG. WHITLAM SAID THAT PROBLEM WAS THAT THERE WAS NO ONE IN ISRAEL OF SUFFICIENT STANDING

TO BRING ABOUT A BASIC CHANGE IN APPROACH, FLATTER-
INGLY NOTED THAT ISRAEL NEEDED SOMEONE OF BHUTTO'S
POLITICAL SKILL AND STATURE. BHUTTO ALSO MENTIONED IN
MIDDLE EASTERN CONTEXT THAT HE BELIEVED THAT IN
REJECTING THE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE US THE SOVIETS
WERE MOTIVATED BY A DESIRE TO IMPRESS THE ARAB COUNTRIES
THAT THEY WERE NOT SEEING OUT THEIR INTERESTS TO THE
US.

5. COMMONWEALTH MEMBERSHIP. WHITLAM USED OCCASION
TO MAKE PITCH FOR PAKISTAN'S RETURN TO THE COMMON-
WEALTH. HE AGREED THAT AUSTRALIA'S COMMONWEALTH
EXPERIENCE HAD BEEN QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF
PAKISTAN BUT MAINTAINED THAT COMMONWEALTH MEMBERSHIP
WAS VERY USEFUL. BHUTTO, REFERRING TO 1972 PAK
WITHDRAWAL FROM COMMONWEALTH, SAID THAT REASON
PAKS HAD QUIT WAS THAT WITH BRITAIN GOING INTO
EUROPE AND THE COMMONWEALTH'S AFRICAN AND ASIAN
MEMBERS INCREASINGLY USING COMMONWEALTH MEETINGS
TO DRUM UP SUPPORT FOR THEIR POSITIONS ON PAROCHIAL PROBLEMS,
LITTLE COULD BE SERVED BY PAKS REMAINING WITHIN
THE ORGANIZATION. PROBLEM OF BANGLADESH RECOGNITION
HAD ONLY BEEN OCCASION FOR PAK WITHDRAWAL, NOT BASIC
REASON FOR IT. BHUTTO WAS UNRESPONSIVE TO WHITLAM'S
CALL FOR RETURN BUT AUSTRALIANS WENT AWAY WITH IDEA
THAT THERE WAS STILL SOME HOPE FOR WHAT WE UNDERSTAND
IS WHITLAM'S LONG-TIME EFFORT TO BRING BOTH PAKISTAN
AND BURMA BACK ON THE ROLLS.

6. AUSTRALIAN WHEAT. WHITLAM TOLD PAKS HE WOULD
GIVE "PRIORITY CONSIDERATION" TO PAK REQUEST FOR THE
PURCHASE OF A FURTHER 200,000 TONS OF AUSTRALIAN
WHEAT. HE SAID GOA COULD NOT GIVE FIRM REPLY UNTIL
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THE PRESENT CROP REPORTS CAME IN WITHIN THE NEXT FEW
WEEKS.

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